



*When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace to the people,
to make music in the heart.
— Howard Thurman*

The Children's Christmas pageant that our congregation enjoyed at Westminster Presbyterian Church several weeks ago certainly provided an incredibly delightful moment for our church family. At one point near the conclusion of the performance, I noticed that one of the performers (playing the part of an angel) was rearranging the halo that was sliding from her head.

Now while it was an endearing scene, I was taken with the thought that her experience represents the Christian life after Christmas. During the holiday season, most of us are filled with feelings of peace on earth and good will to all people. We often participate in the "angelic" work of sharing with our less fortunate friends in the community, considering how we can promote God's work among our fellow human beings, and reflecting in our homes, in our offices, and in our lives the light and life that the birth of the Christ Child brings.

But once Christmas has passed, our halos sometimes begin to slide off our heads, and some of the feathers of goodness and generosity fall from our metaphorical angelic wings. Yet we trust that even after we pack them in the attic with the other decorations they will be ready to be used again next year in order to inspire us with the spirit of the season.

(The Work of Christmas cont. on page 2)

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*Happy
New
Year*

(The Work of Christmas cont. from page 1)

However, God’s gift of the Child in the manger is not meant to be embraced only in December when our hearts and halos are in the right place or when our wings and our witness lift us to new levels of goodness and grace. On the contrary, God’s gift of Jesus Christ initiates the beginning of our work.

Having been blessed by the One in the manger, we now depart as transformed people who live in the reality of our Lord. We re-adjust our halos after the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, so that we may continue to reflect God’s love in our daily lives by committing ourselves to the true spirit of Christmas throughout the entire year . . .

by sharing our resources with the people who truly need our gifts . . .

by living faithfully in ways that will bring peace on earth . . .

by expressing our love in more direct ways than gifts . . .

and by examining our activities in the light of our deepest values.

Living this way throughout the year immerses us in the beauty and holiness that God revealed at Christmas, and it gives us something true, meaningful, and life-giving to which we can commit our lives. And if these things are happening among us, then truly the Christ Child has been born in our hearts.

Blessings,
tom

A LETTER FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends of New Covenant Community Church,

As 2021 draws to a close and my term as Governing Board President winds down, a lot of thoughts come to me, but I would like to start by thanking everyone for their continued faithfulness to this congregation as our church home in the larger body of Christ. For nearly two years now, the challenges of a world-wide pandemic and the threats to our own health and lives, and the health and lives of everyone around us have been burdens on each of us personally, and on our collective life as members of this church. Some of us have contracted the corona virus, some of us with mild cases, others with more serious complications, and some of us have lost loved ones to the disease. All of us have had our lives changed in large ways and small, as we try to protect ourselves and the people around us. For ourselves as members of the church,

(President’s Letter cont.- page 3)

**MAKING
PLANS
New
Initiatives:**
Plan to meet
sometime in
January to
discuss a
number of
items:
our church’s
plan for the
Hunger Walk
on May 1,
some type of
church mission
project for
February,
and a possible
collaboration
with
One Family
Under Guard.



Happy New Year

(President's Letter cont. from page 2)

we lost the familiar gathering in weekly worship and in casual fellowship. And, when we returned to our sanctuary, we remained physically distant. As one then another variant of the virus appeared, we have been forced back into hiding our faces behind masks. Yes, the masks are an act of caring for one another, but also a loss, when we can no longer see each other fully or hear each other clearly.

And still we have stuck with each other and stood by our church. We have continued our financial support, and maintained our mission programs in Akron and reaching out around the world. We have kept our worship services available online, even when we could not meet together in person, and since then, for the good of those who were still unable to do that safely or comfortably. On a personal note, I want to thank everyone for their support and patience with me this past year through all the times I have fallen short of my own goals and other people's expectations.

Will things ever be normal again? I wish I knew what normal actually is! I am confident that things will never go back to being just like they were before, because that is not how the world works. We live in a world that is always changing. We have new challenges ahead of us, and old challenges that are growing even more imposing. There are probably also old challenges that no longer matter so much, or even at all. What we certainly need is God's continued guidance on what best serves Him and His way for this world. And we need a clear vision of what that way is becoming now.

In the new year, I am optimistic for New Covenant. I am conscious of many things that I was not able to accomplish this past year. I don't know how many of them I will be able to achieve next year, but I am committed to continuing to support our congregation with the skills and talents I have. I am confident that our pastor, Tom Ulrich, and our incoming president, Nancy Clem, will keep steady hands on the rudder, and that our members will continue to pull, push, squeeze and lean in, to keep us moving faithfully forward. And I will be happy to be a part of that.

In Christ's service,
Tim Meyer



DON'T

FORGET

Sunday, we're back at NCCC, so don't forget to bring your Acme receipts to church with you, and drop them into the little church.

The deadline to turn in receipts is Sunday, January 16, 2022.

Happy
New
Year

FELLOWSHIP

Take time to view the photos printed on the hall bulletin board from our Dec. 4 Christmas party. Great attendance; great food; and great fun with the white elephant gift exchange.

Coming Up:

Welcome 2022 Brunch will be January 9th after church in Fellowship Hall. Yes, it's still on, but there are some rules to follow.

Attendees should wear masks from the service into the hall and in the buffet lines.

Take your mask off while eating, but if you go up for seconds, please put it back on before returning to the food.

There will be 4 persons at each round table.

The Board table will be used if needed.

If you were asked to bring a food item, please arrive by 10:15 and bring a serving utensil.

To obtain a more accurate count, a signup sheet will be out on Jan. 2.

Next on the agenda, but still to be planned, is a **Super Bowl Soup and Salad Lunch** for February 13th, after church. A signup sheet will be circulated for soup makers and attendees.

In March, the ladies plan to gather at the church on some Tuesday for a catered lunch. More later.

April brings us the **Easter Sunday Continental Breakfast** on the 17th.

In late June, an excursion to **Porthouse** to see a play will occur, and in either July or August, there will be a party of some kind at the Williams' house.

Aside from a brief meeting of the Fellowship Committee after church this Sunday, the committee will meet on January 14, 10:30 at the church to plan February's event.



Next AAIC Meeting

Tuesday, January 4

Noon-1:15 p.m.

Via Zoom

Meeting ID- 863 5070
6831-

Passcode-906431.

In light of two recent resignations, the organization has made the transition to an expanded "Leadership Team." Team members include Conni Dubick, Allan Lane, Kathy Ress, Judy DiNardo, and Reesá Mathews. This group will work together to coordinate programs/events along with the many members who have stepped up to keep things moving along.



Just want to
thank you...

...and ask the Lord to
shower *you*
with His blessings!

*Thank You Very much
you have made my
family a wonderful Christmas
Some times we never
know where our help
comes from, But through
you we know its God
Love
Eugene Hopson*

2022 HUNGER WALK

The planning committee for the
13th Annual AAIC Fairlawn Hunger Walk
plans to meet
Thursday January 6,
7:00 p.m., on Zoom.
Contact Nancy Williams if you would like the link information.

The plan is for the walk to be in-person on May 1, and will start at the UU Church in Fairlawn. Dawn Scott and Susan Gallagher are the co-chairs for 2022.

Our New Initiatives group will handle our approach to this year's walk.

Believing Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, we envision a reality where every person on the planet has access to clean, sustainable, life-changing energy.

Donations may be mailed to:
P.O. Box 5004, Jacksonville, AR 72078

*Thank you for supporting us in 2021!
We hope we can count on you in 2022*

Please visit us at
www.solarunderthesun.org
to donate, or scan this QR code.

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Making Spirits Bright!